

EMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
REFORMER 73

Qu'importe! c'est officiel,
Ou vit quatre e*diteurs me suivre:
Oui, Paul, Mathieu, Pierre, et Michel
Voulttrent imprimer mon. livxe! . . .
Craignant mes excentricit6s
Mathieu ne vit pas mon merite;
Paul ne vit pas mes quality's,
Pierre ne vit pas mes beaut&,
Mais Michel les vit
Maia Michel les vit¹
Tout de suite ! "

Zola, however, did not laugh or jeer at "
Madame Bovary";
Jie felt that a literary evolution might be at
hand, as is
shown by his subsequent correspondence with
Valabregue.
The struggle which was to last all his life, one
between his
reason and his imagination, was beginning, if
indeed it had
not begun previously; for the oscillation which
one observes
in his writings between romanticism and
realism — or
naturalism as the latter became in its
advanced stage —
would indeed seem to be only a continuation of
what had
happened in his school days, when, in spite of
proficiency
in literary subjects, he had elected to follow a
scientific
course of study, in the midst of which, however,
his literary
"bent had still and ever asserted itself. Novalis
has said:
"Every person who consists of more than one
person is a
person of the second power — or a genius." If
that be true,
then Zola was certainly a genius; for there
were always
two men in him. And, in any case, those who
desire to
understand him aright should never lose sight
of the duality

of his nature.

But at the stage of his career which one has
now reached,

¹ A pun on the name of the publisher, Michel Le*vy. It must
be admitted
that while the authors of " Ohe" ! les petits Agneaux " scoffed
at Flaubert, they
gave him a splendid advertisement.